

FastForwardGeorgia

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Unified messaging to replace aging voice mail systems

GTA is replacing the state's outdated voice mail system with a Unified Messaging service that will make it easier for state employees to manage messages of all kinds.

GTA awarded the contract for Unified Messaging on May 30 to Unified Arts, one of 10 companies responding to an RFP in March 2006. The company will provide the new service and bill agencies directly.

Unified Messaging can meet agency needs now and in the future because it works with both Centrex and VoIP. It provides voice mail, faxes, long-distance calling cards, conference calls and automated attendants through a single system and makes them all easier to manage. The service will be especially beneficial to mobile employees and teleworkers.

Information sessions, in-depth training coming this fall

GTA is hosting information sessions about the new service at various locations around the state this fall. The sessions last about one hour and are designed to provide an overview of the new service to a target audience of agency telecom coordinators and IT staff. A representative from Unified Arts will demonstrate key features of the service and answer questions along with GTA staff.

Information sessions will be held in Athens, Atlanta, Augusta, Rome, Savannah and Macon. Exact dates, times and locations will be posted on GTA's Web site.

In-depth training sessions for selected agency staff will also be held around the state. A schedule is being developed.

Retrieve voice and fax messages by e-mail

The new service makes it possible to receive voice and fax messages in a single mailbox that's accessible through a user's desk phone, cell phone, e-mail or Internet-enabled personal digital assistant. Users can edit their directory information and manage advanced calling and notification features over a secure Web site or by phone



Unified Messaging brings all your communications together and costs less

See **Unified Messaging**, page 4

Inside this issue

2

georgia.gov unveils enhancements

3

VoIP contract to be awarded this fall

4

Data-sharing projects underway

5

Six communities receive funding for Wi-Fi

6

GTA gathers agency info for e-mail consolidation

GTA offers new series of project management classes

georgia.gov unveils enhancements

User feedback drives improvements to usability, navigation and content

It's now easier for citizens to conduct their business with Georgia state government, thanks to a revamped georgia.gov (www.georgia.gov).

The state's Web site has improved functionality and a new look and feel designed to help citizens find government services and information more quickly.

Here are some of the improvements.

- A compilation of forms from various state agencies is now easily accessible from a single page at www.forms.georgia.gov.
- More content and links to services are on the home page.
- An upgraded search engine powered by Google gives faster, more relevant search results.
- Anyone moving to Georgia can find relocation information at www.relocate.georgia.gov.
- Weather, traffic and smog information on the home page.



georgia.gov is the front door to state government

- Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds are available for users who want the latest news headlines from georgia.gov.
- Users can take a weekly poll and learn more about state government.

Portal links to 125 online services

georgia.gov is the front door to state government services and information. The site features links to 125 different online services that enable citizens to conduct business with state government at any time. Links to 120 state agency Web sites and more than 700 city and county governments are also available.

Online services on the site include:

- driver's license renewal
- job searches
- business registration
- tax information and services
- road and traffic conditions
- reservations for state parks
- hunting and fishing licenses.

In making changes to georgia.gov, GTA used feedback from online surveys that measured users' satisfaction with the site. The upgrade is the first in a series of continual improvements that will bring more online services and information to Georgians.

To provide your own feedback about georgia.gov, contact GTA by using the "Contact Us" link at the bottom of any georgia.gov page. ■

Patrick Moore named GTA's interim executive director

Patrick Moore, deputy chief operating officer for Governor Sonny Perdue, has been named interim executive director of GTA.

His appointment came after Tom Wade left GTA September 1 for a position at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University.

Mr. Moore will lead GTA until a permanent director is appointed.

"Tom Wade has been a dedicated public servant for more than two decades," said Governor Perdue. "I'm appreciative of his leadership, hard work and particularly his consensus-building skills that helped launch major advancements at the Georgia Technology Authority."

Mr. Wade joined GTA in 2000 as deputy executive director. He was appointed acting executive director in 2002 and executive director in 2003. He led GTA through major initiatives to modernize the state's IT infrastructure, including the relocation of the state data center and upgrading the WAN to MPLS technology.

Mr. Moore will maintain his role as deputy COO for Governor Perdue, although he will spend most of his time at GTA during the interim period. He has been a key liaison with GTA for the Governor's Office. He serves on the Critical Projects Review Panel, which oversees major IT projects, and chairs the Governance Council, whose members from various state agencies develop policies for data sharing and shared services.

Mr. Moore received his undergraduate degree from Yale University and his Masters of Business Administration from the University of Virginia. He joined Governor Perdue's staff in 2002. ■

Portal Advisory Council helps set future direction, priorities

The Portal Advisory Council was formed this spring to help GTA set the future direction and priorities for georgia.gov.

The council is made up of representatives from the following state agencies:

- Department of Administrative Services
- Department of Community Health
- Department of Driver Services
- Department of Economic Development
- Department of Human Resources
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Revenue
- Governor's Office of Constituent Services
- Governor's Office of Customer Service
- Office of Consumer Affairs

Its responsibilities include:

- providing recommendations on adding information and services to the portal and state Web sites
- helping to create a common-sense usability guide for all state Web sites to follow
- providing input on standards for content, services and usability
- establishing a process for agencies to request seed money for application development and establishing criteria for approving those requests
- recommending enterprise applications and tools for GTA to make available to agencies ■

Four vendors respond to RFP for VoIP services

Four vendors submitted proposals in response to GTA's RFP for VoIP services by the deadline of August 21.

The responding vendors are

- Avaya
- BellSouth
- Nortel
- Qwest Communications.

The proposals are currently under evaluation, and the award of an enterprise contract to a single vendor is expected this fall. As a result, agencies that are ready to move forward with VoIP will be able to begin implementation later in the year.

A Request for Proposal was posted on June 22 on the Georgia Procurement Registry. Prior to the RFP, GTA posted a Request for Information on May 1 that contained proposed requirements for the RFP. Vendors were encouraged to submit comments about the proposed requirements.

VoIP trials completed

Meanwhile, VoIP trials at several state agencies were completed in July. GTA organized the trials to determine the value of VoIP for state agencies and other customers.

The trials allowed agencies to test VoIP in various business settings and with different applications, including conference calling, instant messaging and unified messaging. They paired each agency with a different vendor:

- Department of Human Resources with Avaya
- Department of Technical and Adult Education with Mitel
- GBI with Stormwood
- Georgia Forestry Commission with Cisco.

A summary of findings from the VoIP trials is available on GTA's Web site at www.gta.georgia.gov. ■

Unified Messaging service offerings

The basic Unified Messaging service includes the following features.

30-message Central Inbox for voice mail and faxes.

Follow Me – Forward incoming calls to any phone at any time.

On The Road Response – Respond to voice mails by phone or computer while you're on the road.

Message Notification – Receive notifications on your personal digital assistant, cell phone or pager when new voice or fax messages arrive in your mailbox.

Multiple Greetings – Record several greetings for use at different times of the day.

Call Transfer – Move an ongoing call from one phone to another without disrupting the call.

Call Whisper – Receive announcements for incoming calls while on an outbound call or conference call. Choose to speak with the incoming caller, send the caller to voice mail or let the caller join your current call.

Virtual Fax Machine – Receive all your faxes in your inbox and save a copy on your computer for future reference.

These additional services are available for an extra fee.

Auto-attendant – Update your auto-attendant in real time using a secure Web site that converts text to speech. You can also build and reorganize the flow of your auto-attendant on-the-fly at any time.

Conference Calling Without Reservations – Set up a conference call at any time over the Web or by phone.

Calling Card – Make long distance calls from anywhere and automatically charge them to your Unified Messaging mailbox. ■

Data sharing enables agencies to improve operations

Many state agencies maintain useful information that other agencies would like to access so they can offer innovative services, improve their operational efficiency or fulfill legislative mandates.

Helping agencies share information securely is one of GTA's strategic goals, and we are currently facilitating several projects involving data sharing among state agencies.

The **Department of Education (DOE)** is one of the leaders in pursuing data-sharing projects with other state agencies. DOE hosted a meeting August 24 attended by about 10 agencies with whom it would like to share data using a technical infrastructure based on webMethods that GTA put in place. Agencies learned how webMethods makes it possible to exchange information quickly and securely between different databases.

DOE is already sharing data successfully with the **Department of Driver Services (DDS)**. DOE receives information from school districts about academic and disciplinary problems involving students that result in the loss of driver's licenses as required by state law. DOE then transmits the information to DDS, which suspends the student's license. At first, DOE used secure FTP to transfer information to DDS, but later decided to switch to GTA's webMethods-based infrastructure.

Some of the other opportunities for data sharing that DOE is exploring would involve information about insurance coverage for school buildings from the **Office of the Insurance Commissioner** and foster children from the **Department of Human Resources**. At the DOE-hosted meeting, **Pardons and Paroles** expressed interest in accessing information from DOE to confirm the educational levels of inmates.

Other agencies using webMethods to share data are the **Georgia Bureau of Investigation**, the **Department of Revenue (DOR)** and DDS. The GBI accesses driver's license information from DDS and motor vehicle registrations from DOR in real time.

In addition, the **Office of Child Support Services (OCSS)** and the **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** have successfully tested data sharing that's intended to prompt parents to pay delinquent child support. Whenever someone tries to obtain a hunting or fishing license from DNR, the application can be compared with an OCSS database to determine if the person is behind on child-support payments. If so, the license could be denied. Data sharing between OCSS and DNR is scheduled to be placed in production in early 2007.

Eight other data-sharing projects involving as many as 14 state agencies and some federal agencies are at various stages of development and implementation. ■

Unified Messaging, continued from page 1

or Internet-enabled wireless device.

Agencies can choose to manage their own Unified Messaging accounts. Using a secure Web site, they'll be able to add and delete accounts and to assign different types of messaging services to employees based on their business needs. GTA can also manage an agency's accounts for a fee.

Substantial cost savings, no equipment purchases

Unified Messaging will save an estimated \$2 million per year statewide while at the same time providing a more comprehensive and flexible service. The cost of the basic Unified Messaging service is substantially less than agencies currently pay just for voice mail, and agencies do not have to purchase new equipment. The conversion to Unified Messaging will take place in phases over the next 12 months. ■

State funding awarded to six communities for wireless networks

Six communities have been awarded funding from the Wireless Communities Georgia Program to assist with establishing wireless broadband networks. The recipients are:

City of Augusta	\$562,500
City of Decatur	\$427,500
City of Dublin	\$318,750
Gwinnett County	\$750,000
City of Milledgeville	\$862,500
City of Thomasville	\$500,000

They were among 17 communities submitting applications for funding by the deadline of July 21, 2006. The applications were evaluated by representatives from several state agencies.

The networks will use Wi-Fi as their foundation technology. Wi-Fi is a proven, standards-based technology already in wide use. Many products use Wi-Fi, including laptop computers, tablet PCs and personal digital assistants.

GTA managing Governor's wireless program

GTA is managing the Wireless Communities Georgia Program, which Governor Perdue proposed earlier this year and the General Assembly funded in the amount of \$4 million.

A separate program managed by the OneGeorgia Authority is providing \$5 million to rural communities seeking to establish broadband networks of any kind.

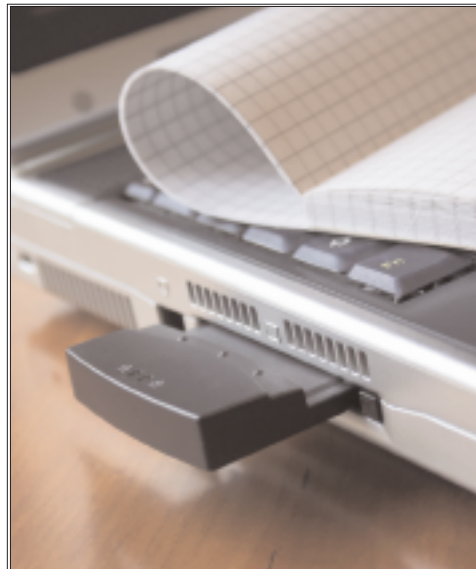
The two programs are part of Governor Perdue's commitment to ensure the availability of broadband connections in every Georgia community. By supporting the deployment of high-speed networks, his programs are designed to

- promote economic development
- expand educational opportunities and
- improve the availability and efficiency of government services.

"I call broadband the new dial tone," Governor Perdue said when he addressed legislators about the programs. "We could not imagine any business – much less an entire community – operating without access to reliable telephone service. Today, broadband access is just as important for our 21st century communications infrastructure."

Throughout the country, communities of all sizes are expressing intense interest in wireless technology. By at least one count, 400 communities are either planning or implementing wireless networks, which are increasingly viewed as a public utility along with electricity and water.

For more information about the OneGeorgia Authority's rural broadband initiative, visit www.onegeorgia.org. ■



A wide range of products use Wi-Fi, including laptop computers, tablet PCs and personal digital assistants.

GTA gathers agency info for e-mail consolidation

GTA has completed the process of gathering business and technical requirements from state agencies as part of developing a business case for consolidating state e-mail systems. Agencies have been asked to validate the results, which were presented to them at an August 31 meeting.

During the information-gathering process, many agencies completed online surveys about their e-mail usage and systems, and GTA met individually with other agencies. The business and technical requirements will form a critical part of the business case, which will evaluate agency needs and propose different approaches to e-mail consolidation.

Governor Perdue's Commission for a New Georgia recommended consolidating state e-mail systems to reduce unnecessary duplication, improve operating efficiency and reduce costs. Most agencies use their own stand-alone systems, and there's no consistent platform from one agency to the next.

The consolidation effort recognizes that e-mail has evolved into more than a way to exchange messages and files. For many agencies, it's become one of

their most critical software applications by helping them to manage their calendars, tasks and business contacts. E-mail systems must also synchronize with wireless devices so mobile workers can send and receive e-mails and files while they're out of the office at meetings or traveling.

GTA and state agencies will review the business case together, and a decision about the approach to e-mail consolidation will be made with agency input. Based on joint findings, GTA plans to issue an RFP for e-mail consolidation in the fall and to begin pilots with up to three state agencies in early 2007. The results of the pilots will be used to develop a transition plan for other agencies. ■

GTA offers new series of project management classes

GTA is once again offering state agencies a series of classes in project management. Promoting project management expertise throughout state government is one way GTA tries to ensure successful IT projects.

The following classes are scheduled.

- **Project Management Foundations**, January 9-11, 2007; April 10-12, 2007
Our introductory course teaches the basic concepts, tools and techniques for managing projects.
- **Project Planning, Scheduling and Control**, November 1-2, 2006; February 6-7, 2007; May 9-10, 2007
The course addresses key planning processes, including the development of time and cost estimates and a work breakdown structure.
- **Identifying and Managing Risks**, Identifying and Managing Risks, November 27-28, 2006; February 27-28, 2007; May 30-31, 2007
Participants learn how to identify and evaluate risks and to develop a plan for minimizing their effects on a project.
- **Recovering Failing Projects**, December 11-13, 2006; March 20-22, 2007; June 19-21, 2007
Participants learn tools and techniques for turning around a failing project. The course is recommended for those with some project management experience.

The courses are offered without charge to state agencies and are held at the Floyd Building in Atlanta. Registration generally begins three weeks before the course start date, and classes fill up quickly.

For more information, e-mail gtainfo@ga.gov. ■

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